

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application identified in caption, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. § 1.111 and in light of the remarks which follow, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3 and 11-24 are all the claims pending in the application.

I. Response to Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 3 and 11-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,179,168 to Hirasawa. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection for the following reasons.

Sole independent claim 1 recites a resin composition consisting essentially of 5-50 parts by weight of a potassium ionomer (A) of an ethylene-unsaturated carboxylic acid copolymer comprising a potassium ionomer of two or more types of ethylene-unsaturated carboxylic acid copolymers which has an average acid content of 10 to 30 % by weight, has difference in acid contents between the highest content and the lowest content of 1 % by weight or more, and has a neutralization degree by potassium of 60 % or more, 0.5 to 20 parts by weight of an ethylene-unsaturated ester copolymer (B), wherein the unsaturated ester in the ethylene-unsaturated ester copolymer is a vinyl ester selected from the group consisting of vinyl acetate and vinyl propionate; or an unsaturated carboxylic acid ester selected from the group consisting of methyl acrylate, ethyl acrylate, isopropyl acrylate, isobutyl acrylate, n-butyl acrylate, isooctyl acrylate, 2-ethylhexyl acrylate, methyl methacrylate, ethyl methacrylate and isobutyl methacrylate, and 94.5 to 30 parts by weight of a thermoplastic resin (C) other than (A) and (B).

The presently claimed invention provides a resin composition superior in anti-static properties, processability and compatibility, which are unexpected results.

Specifically, since potassium ionomer has poor dispersibility and compatibility, when potassium ionomer is blended in polyolefin type resin having high crystallinity such as high

density polyethylene and polypropylene, it is often observed that melt torque of an extruder increases and productivity falls in molding processing and thereby bad appearance of molded articles is easily caused.

The presently claimed invention provides a resin composition having improved processability without impairing physical properties of a thermoplastic resin and enables to obtain molded articles having good appearance even when potassium ionomer is blended with high crystalline polyolefin type resin.

Hirasawa describes a blend comprising at least two ionomers, as pointed out by the Examiner. However, Hirasawa does not describe a resin composition containing an ethylene-unsaturated ester copolymer (B) and a thermoplastic resin (C) other than (A) and (B), as defined in present claim 1.

Hirasawa also describes the resin composition comprising (I) the ionomer composition and (II) a thermoplastic polymer at a weight ratio of from 5/95 to 95/5 (column 2, lines 49-52). However, Hirasawa only exemplifies various types of thermoplastic polymers as one single polymer at column 6, lines 9-23, and never suggests selecting a plurality of polymers.

Further, as concrete examples, Hirasawa describes only blends of potassium ionomer and a single thermoplastic polymer, for example, potassium ionomer and nylon 6 (Example 11), potassium ionomer and ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer (Example 12), and potassium ionomer and low density polyethylene (Examples 15-16).

On the other hand, present claim 1 recites a specific resin composition consisting essentially of (A), (B) and (C) that shows excellent effects as mentioned above.

Hirasawa does not describe the specific combination of components and the specific selection of proportion of each component in the resin composition defined in present claim 1. As such, Hirasawa does not disclose or anticipate claim 1.

Furthermore, the Office Action has failed to cite any portions of Hirasawa which teach selecting and combining specific components (B) and (C) defined in present claim 1, from a wide variety of thermoplastic polymers described therein.

Moreover, as noted above, the specific resin composition of the presently claimed invention shows improved processability without impairing physical properties of a thermoplastic resin and enables to obtain molded articles having good appearance even when potassium ionomer is blended with high crystalline polyolefin type resin. Hirasawa does not disclose or suggest these effects.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is novel and patentable over Hirasawa, and thus the rejection should be withdrawn. Additionally, claims 3 and 11-24 depend from claim 1, directly or indirectly, and thus are patentable over the cited reference at least by virtue of their dependency.

II. Conclusion

From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order and such action is earnestly solicited. If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at her earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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